

SSVF Priority 1 Community Plan

Date Completed/Revised:

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Month			Day			Year			

Continuum of Care (CoC) Name: Eastern Carolina Homelessness Organization, Inc. (ECHO)		CoC #: SC-503
CoC Representative: Joey Smoak		Title: President/Executive Director
Phone/Email: 843-213-1798/joeysmoak_44@yahoo.com		
Person Completing this Plan: Joey Smoak		Title: President/Executive Director
Phone/Email: 843-213-1798/joeysmoak_44@yahoo.com		

1. Primary Planning and Coordination Group: Identify the primary group responsible for planning and coordinating efforts to prevent and end homelessness among Veterans in the CoC. Identify the principal members of this group and their affiliation.

Primary Group Name:	
Principle Members	Affiliation
Joey Smoak	ECHO
Joey Nichols	Any Length Recovery, Inc (Sumter, SC)
Jackie Brown	Waccamaw Center for Mental Health
Cecilia Meggs	Lighthouse Ministries
Al Teague	Little River Medical Center/ Waccamaw Mental Health
Patricia Bradford	VISN-7 VA Network Coordinator
Skye Moreno	HUD-VASH Case Manager
Bernard McLeroy	Peer Support Specialist, VA
CB Anderson	Veterans Resource Center – Florence, SC
Kris Tourtelle	Veterans Welcome Home Center – Little River, SC
Pam Davis	Little River Medical Center
Sharon Forrest	Myrtle Beach Public Housing Authority
Selena Wilson	180 Place (Georgetown and Horry Counties)
Tiffany Major	SSVF Program Manager, Alston-Wilkes
Linda Williams	Ralph Johnson VA Medical Center
Scottie Davis	City of Florence

2. Ongoing Review and Coordination: Briefly describe how often (e.g., monthly) the above group or a related review/coordination group meets to review Veterans who are homeless, track progress toward re-housing, and coordinate efforts. Include a summary of what information is reviewed during these meetings.

The Primary Planning and Coordination Group meet on a monthly basis to review the status and progress of the SSVF program. Information reviewed is: Overall housing/ assistance goals, outreach/referral efforts and scheduling, developing and augmenting current network of benefit/ assistance resources, and applying “best practice models” to streamline processes and efficiently target re-housing Veterans and their families or helping them maintain housing as well as connecting them with needed services, benefits and assistance.

3. SSVF Grantees Serving CoC Geography: Identify each SSVF funded agency serving Veterans in the CoC geography and each SSVF total grant award amount for FY15, including priority 1 ("surge"), 2 (renewals), and 3 (other new) awards. If one agency has multiple awards, list each separately. Pro-rate a grant award amount if the award covers more than one CoC geography. Include the projected annual number of households each grantee can serve and the total number of households across all grantees.

Grantee Agency Name	Grant Amount	Total Annual Projected Households	Total Annual Projected Households: Rapid Re-Housing	% of Total Households to be Assisted with Rapid Re-Housing
ECHO (Priority 1)	\$1,000,000.00	200	160	80%
Alston-Wilkes (Priority 2)	\$120,000.00	70	42	60%
TOTAL	\$1,378,106.00	270	202	75%

4. Annual Demand and Need for Rapid Re-Housing Assistance: Using the *Veterans Demand Analysis and Progress Tracking Tool* or other demand analysis data agreed to by the primary group above, identify:

- The most recent actual or projected annual unduplicated number of homeless Veterans (on street and/or who access emergency shelter, Safe Havens, or transitional housing, including GPD) in the CoC geography, by household type
- The number of those Veterans who will need rapid re-housing assistance to exit homelessness
- The number of Veterans needing rapid re-housing assistance who are projected to be eligible for SSVF RRH assistance.

	Annual Unduplicated Homeless Veteran Households	Estimated # of Needing RRH (a)	Projected # to be Assisted with SSVF RRH (b)	Projected # to be Assisted with Other RRH (c)	Gap (a-(b+c))
Households without Children	324	225	186	30	9
Households with Children	66	45	34	11	0
Total Homeless Veteran Households	390	270	220	41	9

5. CoC Goals for Ending Homelessness Among Veterans: List the CoC's goals for ending Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015 (fill in additional related goals the CoC has determined, if relevant).

What are the CoC's goals for the estimated number of Veterans, including chronically homeless Veterans, who will be homeless as of the night of the January 2016 PIT Count?

	All Homeless Veteran Households (including CH)			Chronically Homeless Veteran Households		
	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL	Sheltered	Unsheltered	TOTAL
Households without Children	30	7	37	2	1	3
Households with Children	5	0	5	1	0	1
Total Households	35	7	42	3	1	4

Has the CoC established other goals related to preventing and ending homelessness among Veterans by the end of 2015? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If “Yes”, please describe:

ECHO has strategic plans in place and in development to end homelessness among Veterans and all homeless and at-risk individuals and families. These plans include, but are not limited to; 14 HUD CoC Program funded Permanent Supportive Housing Projects (currently in operation), 2 of which ECHO directly administers. Our Permanent Housing Bed Inventory stands at 509. Additionally, ECHO has two transitional shelters operating and 6 emergency shelters in the 506 total Emergency, Safe Haven and Transitional Housing Bed Count. There are 5 Emergency Solution Grant programs in operation in the ECHO region (ECHO operates one of these) that are also included in this plan to end Veteran and Veteran Family Homelessness (these beds do not have an income qualifier for RRH to help close the gap).

ECHO will be working directly with the Public Housing Authorities in our 12 counties to potentially add HUD-VASH vouchers in our region. Currently, ECHO has established relationships with Myrtle Beach and Georgetown Housing Authorities to implement HUD-VASH programs as well as goals to bring HUD-VASH in Florence and Sumter counties. ECHO will now be hosting a weekly Clinic/Stand Down event in conjunction with the HUD/VASH VA Office in Horry County starting in February.

ECHO also has a goal of establishing a GPD or contract housing program in Myrtle Beach and Florence as well as applying for a New HUD-funded Permanent Supportive Housing Grant. Until such time ECHO has established a referral relationship with the existing GPD Programs in Columbia and Charleston currently in operation.

6. SSVF Integration into CoC Coordinated Assessment System: Briefly describe how Veterans access SSVF assistance (across all SSVF grantees) via the CoC’s coordinated assessment system (e.g., “All Veterans who present to the CoC coordinated assessment center are screened for their current situation, needs, and SSVF eligibility. Then....). If not yet fully developed, describe your plans and implementation timeframe. Specifically address:

- a) How Veterans who present for shelter are screened and diverted to SSVF homelessness prevention assistance when they have somewhere safe and appropriate to stay that night.
- b) How Veterans who become literally homeless are screened and triaged to SSVF rapid re-housing assistance as soon as possible once it is clear the Veteran is unable to resolve their homelessness without assistance.

ECHO’s CAS system is fully integrated within the state across all four CoC’s as well as through South Carolina’s 211 call centers. South Carolina is the first fully integrated CAS/211 system in the country. All Veterans who present to the CoC CAS System (either through 211 or outside referring agencies) are directed to the SSVF Intake Assessment Coordinator where they are screened directly into the system for their current situation, needs and SSVF eligibility. ECHO is working with the other three CoC’s in South Carolina through the South Carolina Coalition for the Homeless’ CAS Committee to insure that proper screening questions and qualifiers are uniform across 211, existing referral networks and everyone participating in the CAS. ECHO is also working with the VA Visin 7 Office in seeking to include the VA and Count VA offices in the CAS to ensure that it is a uniform and all inclusive assessment and referral system. ECHO plans to put CAS into operation by the end of March across the Continuum.

- A) If eligible for Homeless Prevention Assistance, the Veteran seeking assistance is taken through assessments (including “But For”, SPDAT & Housing Barriers) to determine the appropriate Housing and Services that are available. If the Veteran/Family does not qualify for the SSVF program they will be provided appropriate referrals to housing services and associated benefits and Veteran Service Navigators will follow-up with these referrals.
- B) Veterans who have become literally homeless are also screened directly into the CAS system by the Intake Assessment Coordinator. As with Veterans seeking homeless prevention assistance, these individuals or families will also be taken through a screening process to determine if they are eligible and a Program Service Coordinator and a Veteran Service Navigator will be assigned to them, to shelter or house them immediately while working with them to attain permanent housing.

7. Long-Term System Improvements: Briefly describe how the CoC plans to utilize SSVF Priority 1 and all other SSVF funding over the next three years to foster long-term system improvements and optimization so that homelessness is prevented whenever possible and when it does occur, it is rare and brief. Specifically address areas for improvement related to:

- a) Further integrating SSVF assistance into the CoC's planning, oversight processes and coordinated assessment system.
- b) Ensuring comprehensive coordination with VA systems and other VA funded programs.
- c) Improving or establishing partnerships with community-based services and public/private housing providers.

ECHO's long term plan over the next three years (as with civilian homelessness) is to become the central agency linking all Veteran Housing options (HUD-VASH, VA Assistance, ESG, PSH, TH, Emergency Shelter) and resources together into one singular network, bound by our recently established CAS. ECHO operates the CAS in our 12 county region and are members of the Statewide CAS Committee which gives us an advantage in making sure that the Veterans issues and needs are handled timely and properly. ECHO will also expand the current planning and oversight processes it uses in housing homeless individuals and their families as a foundation to target the Veteran homelessness issue and to strengthen the current associations that are established. A recent update will be that ECHO was awarded a CoC Planning Grant in the HUD FY2014 competition announcements. These funds will be used partly to develop prioritization listing, strategic planning efforts, more refined and faster referrals, etc. with Veterans and Veterans Families being one of the primary target populations for this Coordinated Planning Effort.

By developing this singular network, this will help to develop and ensure comprehensive coordination with VA systems and other VA funded programs. This network will be established and designed to reduce impediments to Veteran Housing and establish a like-minded peer group with one common goal in mind, to house Veterans and their families quickly and efficiently as the need arises.

ECHO, as it is doing now, will continue to grow, improve and establish partnerships within the community to access local and regional services (community action agencies, regional development offices, religious organizations, etc.) and continue to develop some working relationship with the previously hard to access public housing providers (outside of the Myrtle Beach and Georgetown areas). Close relationships with private housing providers are being developed currently and ECHO also will use past networks from other agencies and programs to increase this network.

Because of the ongoing case management provided through the Program Service Coordinators and Veteran Service Navigators, if Veterans exit the program and face a homeless incident again, the incident will be brief.

8. Other Strengths and Challenges: Briefly describe any additional strengths and/or challenges relevant to your achieving VA and local goals.

Strengths:

Ending Veteran Homelessness is a polarizing topic that agencies, individuals and community leaders (State, Federal, and local) are quick to get behind, support and provide assistance towards and ECHO has established relationships and continues to build and coordinate relationships with these groups. ECHO will also expand upon it's established network of landlords and property management companies to provide immediate housing to Veterans, especially the most challenging and difficult.

A well-established network of agencies from ECHO's membership pool and ongoing determinations of "Best Practices" from other CoC's in the state are an integral part of ECHO's strategic planning to incorporate these practices CoC wide.

ECHO is the lead agency (as well as the CoC) that operates the already established CAS/HMIS system that is being expanded across agencies at the State level, to best serve Veterans and their families through expanded resources and benefit associations. This CAS system is built on the current HMIS data foundation that will provide quantitative data on gaps in services and outcomes.

Weaknesses:

Public Housing Agency support (outside of Myrtle Beach and Georgetown) has been nonexistent and adversarial. Update: Sharon Forest, Executive Director of the Myrtle Beach Housing Authority will be assisting in efforts to work with Sumter and Florence County Housing Authorities as well as the other smaller rural PHA's.